

THE NEWSLETTER FOR CARDIAC FRIENDS



www.cardiacfriends.co.uk

October 2023 Chairman's Report

Dear Friends,

Now, the big question for you all is this! Do you think Global warming is here?

Well, over the past few months there is much to suggest that it has, with most months since June having higher than average temperatures and increased rainfall. We, here in the East have not been so lucky however, with long periods of near-drought conditions interspersed with floods when it did rain! The raging fires on some of the Greek Islands and Hawaii also give us pause to consider.

In the garden, the unpredictable nature of our weather has been the source of strange things and not all of them bad. Our roses are enjoying a much-lengthened blooming and our Clematis, normally over by now, are bursting out into a late and unprecedented re-flowering, unlike anything we have witnessed before, and the garden generally is most buoyant and luxurious.



From left to right:
Clematis "Niobe,"
Clematis "Claire-de-Lune," Dahlia "Pooh,"
and Dahlia unknown
but believed to be
one of the "Bishops."

I know many of you are aware of the great love we have for our garden, so I thought I would include this latest addition, to celebrate Ruth's birthday on 1st September. It took some research, but I eventually thought that this wall-mounted ornament would fit the bill. It is a rural scene incorporating a mirror, and the great benefit is that wherever it is hung, when you look at it, you can see some of the garden reflected within it! The scene naturally changes depending on where you stand to view it. Lovely idea!



During and after my cancer treatment, I found it very challenging to work on our allotment, particularly so when bending over, so, as a consequence we took the decision to cease our tenancy and this has proven to be beneficial in many ways. The money that we had hitherto spent on the allotment was diverted to our garden and we no longer had any need to travel to Hitchin, as our garden lay just outside the back door!

Soon though, the clocks will go back, and we will be restricted in our outdoor pursuits, which have already begun to be curtailed by the shortening days.

For me, it will be back to modelling; a pursuit that I have been an enthusiastic participant of for most of my life in one form or another, and Ruth will be upstairs concentrating more on her card-making activities, rather than keeping the garden looking spick-and-span.

Cardiac Friends activities have continued in accordance with our programme of events and the often E-mails sent out by Ruth to alert and remind people of what is going on. The membership remains buoyant and we do have the occasional new member joining or those existing members who wish to try something new - an excursion into a new activity perhaps.

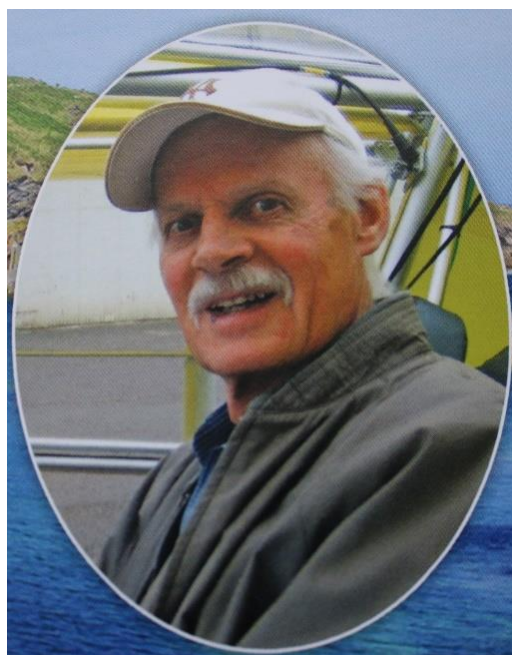
Sadly though, we have lost people as well. There are those who for a variety of reasons, have ceased their membership and all I would say to them is, we will always be here to offer the hand of friendship and support should you wish to re-join, but in any case, we wish you well.

There are also a couple of long-term members, who have sadly passed away, and we offer our sympathies to their family and friends but in addition their passing leaves the Cardiac Friends "family" somewhat the poorer as well.

Brenda Crane absolutely loved the Sunday London walks and the monthly coffee mornings, and was always so appreciative of the friendly atmosphere generated by both. Despite her own ongoing fight with illness, she was a great personal support to me last year when I was going through mine, and Toney Piggins was also an enthusiastic participant of both the London walks, and of the Wednesday walks, and I remember walking with him on many occasions and listening to his Royal Air Force experiences, and his later time as an Air Traffic Controller.



Brenda Lillian Crane 1944 - 2023



Toney Piggins 1934 - 2023

I have to say, that amongst my many responsibilities as Chairman, attending the farewell of our friends, is one I like the least!

Barry Brown

Notes from the Secretary

I endeavour to keep the membership up to date with all the events through emails and of course our thrice-yearly newsletter; this edition being the last of 2023. There is lots to update you all on as we are such an active group.

All of the groups seem to be doing really well especially the line dancing, Wednesday walkers and the exercise group.

I have a message from John and Sue Ramsey after a number of Cardiac Friends attended the memorial service for their son Simon. A collection was taken for the Garden House Hospice; John and Sue would like it known that they took £600.00 to the hospice recently, and express their thanks for the contributions and attendance.

On another note, on the London Walks we use radio intercoms from Vox to hear Kim on our walks and they have proven very useful in busy places. The company provides a disposable ear piece for each transmitter; however, lots of our members, me included have found that with hearing aids these are not practical, so some of us have our own over-the-head earphones. I recently bought a new pair from 'Poundland' for the princely sum of £4.00!

Ruth Brown

Membership Secretary.

I am sorry to say that we recently returned from a holiday to a break-in. Not a lot was stolen, and the damage was a smashed patio door, but the perpetrator found and took 50 Cardiac Friends badges. If you see any on offer anywhere, please let me know.

Thanks

Heather Cotton

Monday Morning Walkers

The Monday Walking Group meets every other week and we commence the walk at 10.30 am. It is a slow walk usually from a garden centre and we stay local which this group prefers. We arrive for our coffee before the hour is up as most of the group are ready for their coffee by then.

We enjoy the lakes at Stevenage and then Dunelm for coffee.

Hitchin Garden Centre and then onto the Letchworth Greenway.

Shepalbury Park in Stevenage where the next walk will be on the 30th October.

Walsworth Common/Purwell Meadow weather permitting as this is on grass.

Bluebell Woods in Stevenage but alternate walk before the bluebell time.

Maggi Bullen



Tuesday Afternoon Swimmers.

Our swimming group gathers fortnightly on a Tuesday (except during school holidays) at Letchworth Leisure Centre. Numbers can vary between 5 and 10. These are leisurely sessions where you can

swim as much or as little as you like.

Afterwards we retire to the café for a coffee and a natter. Come and give it a try.

Refer to the website for dates. www.cardiacfriends.co.uk Events calendar

Pete Howard

Peter Howard is also the Website Manager. The website is a useful tool for keeping abreast of all the Cardiac Friends' activities as well as informing the reader of its beginnings and there are also some interesting articles about members' previous 'lives'.

Wednesday Walks

We continue to attract new members, Ivan and Georgina Scott and most recently Roy Higgins. On a sad note we recently lost one of our members Toney Piggins, he had not walked with us for a couple of years as his sight had been failing. A number of us attended his funeral on 12th September. Toney was also a member of my branch of the Aircrew Association, as we were both in the RAF as aircrew members.

This has been a somewhat difficult few months for me, as earlier in the year I had problems with my calf muscles and more recently Joyce and I had a bout of Covid which left us both with no energy.

I had built a small team who have been doing the 'proving walks' with me and occasionally leading walks in my absence. In particular Cyril Savage, Ian Druce, Peter Dawes and Mike Morley and I was very thankful for their support.



However having gone lame and then got Covid I had to rely mainly on Mike Morley as Cyril and Ian have had their own health problems and Peter was unable to help due to his family situation. I hope they will all soon recover, I need their back up!

I am very grateful to Mike and also to our Chairman Barry who

did the proving walk and led the walk in my absence. Without them I would have had to cancel the walk.

I hope I shall soon be fighting fit again and able to lead you all a 'merry dance'.

I have sent out a notice to members that our annual Christmas Lunch will be held at 'The Rising Sun' on Wednesday 6th December.

The attached picture was taken on our recent walk in Graveley; this was led by Mike and Barry. I walked from the pub in the opposite direction to meet the group as I was unable to do the complete distance.

Fred Maryon

Exercise Group - Thursday Afternoons

The exercise class continues to flourish in style. Our instructor, Emma, is a star and continues to find ways to make our exercise time varied. At the end of each session we have a short time for relaxation which is much enjoyed by most of the class. If it is not your scene you are free to leave at the end of our final stretches. There is a great comradeship in the class, with much chatting, although when we are performing certain routines it can be very quiet as the little grey cells concentrate on what we are doing! We are to have a Christmas lunch on a Friday lunch time, which I hope will be well supported. I would also like to wish Audrey a full recovery after her operation. All our best wishes are with you.

We meet each week at Letchworth Leisure Centre at the studio, between 12.30 and 1.30 on a Thursday. The cost is £14.00 a calendar month payable in advance. The first session is free for you to see if you enjoy it. Come and join us.

Jackie Quinn

Heartsong - Friday Afternoons

Dear Heartsong Friends

It was so much fun putting a little love n peace n good singing vibes in our hearts on September 29th! Thanks so much for coming to sing.

That afternoon's songs were "*All We Are Saying is Give Peace a Chance*" - John Lennon & Yoko Ono, "*Live in Peace*" - Helen Yeoman's -in honour of Peace Day/ Equinox on Sept 21st plus "*Put a little love in Your Heart.*"

Looking forward to our next session on 24th November - do let us know if you have a seasonal favourite song you'd like to sing and wear your best seasonal bling!

Look forward to seeing you there...

Katie and John xx

Be well, breathe deep and keep singing loudly!

Warmest summer singing wishes

🎵 **Katie Rose**

I love singing and helping people sing

John Burden: burdjohn@hotmail.com 01462-712187/07814 088994

Petanque - Friday Afternoons

The 2023 season of pétanque draws to an end with the October gathering. It is ironic that the season last year was disrupted on some occasions with the weather being so hot that it was deemed unsafe to continue, and this year the reverse has been true with some events being cancelled due to excessive rainfall. Ah well! There is no second guessing the British weather. Our numbers attending this year have not been as high as previously either and this is as much to do with hospital appointments and family commitments as it is due to the weather. When we are rained off however, there is some solace to be taken from an impromptu coffee afternoon in the Dimples café.

We will arrange a season of pétanque afternoons next year with the management of the Par-3 Family Golf Centre, probably commencing in April and running through on a monthly basis until October, and the dates for these will be made available as soon as we arrange them.

At the moment, things remain the same as this year, with a Friday slot from 2.00 until 3.00 p.m. and the cost £4 each including boules. Turn up at 1.50 p.m. to sort out teams and pistes.

Barry Brown

Line Dancing - Saturday Mornings.

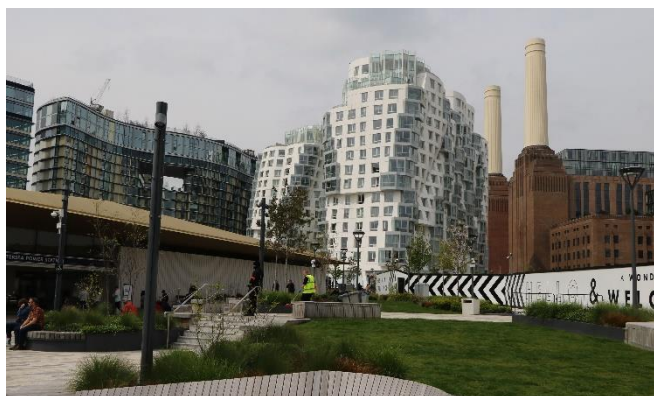


Shirley Williams is leading the line dancing group at the moment ably assisted by Joan Coulson; Janet sends her thanks for keeping the group going in her absence. This activity is not just for the ladies, men can join in too. It is a good all-round exercise, good for our brain, all round fitness as well as social interaction. We can always take new people, as not everyone turns up every week.

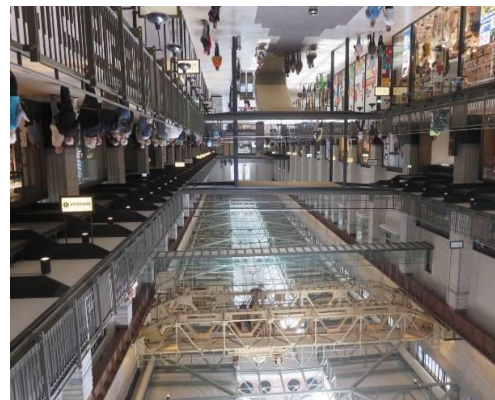
Mary Davis is still happy to instruct. We have a 2-hr session every fortnight, 10.00 - 12.00, at Willian Village Hall, at a modest cost of £6.00, pay as you go. Refreshments are provided with a rota for the cake. The dates for 2024 have been booked! For further details, and as an interim measure, please contact;

Ruth Brown

London Walks - Sundays



The 2023 season of Sunday London walks will be over by the time this newsletter goes out, and it has been a successful



season, with walks in Battersea, London Bridge, Kew, Greenwich, Limehouse and Westminster and covering everything from a converted power station icon to London disasters and finishing with 20th century espionage.

Pictures above: **Battersea Power Station - old and new.** No generators now - just shopping!

Many members have joined the London walks experience for the first time and found them highly informative, and the pre-booked and paid for Sunday lunch at the Wetherspoons pub "Sir John Oldcastle" opposite Farringdon Station, amongst a group of your friends, is most welcome.

Picture below: **Kim telling us all we need to know about Greenwich.**



Our London Blue Badge Guide Kim has been with us for over 20 years, and considers herself a

Cardiac Friend supporter. Her walks are always tailored to suit our group's abilities and needs and the walk itself is neither demanding nor strenuous - more of a gentle stroll really! One plus was that we finally did Limehouse - but all did not go according to plan! (VOX headsets delivery).



The four of us will meet up with Kim early in the New Year at Sir John Oldcastle for a working lunch to discuss the programme for next year, considering London's large events and to ensure they don't conflict with our plans. We will arrange dates and subject matter, and once these are known and agreed, we will send out the dates for the 2024 walks so that they can be committed to calendars and diaries. The subject matter will then be supplied by Kim and will go out in E-mail and letter for everyone, once the costings have been done and after bookings have been made with the pub, VOX

headsets, and the coach travel company. Look out for these around late March/early April time with the first walk usually being in late April.

Picture above: **The Thames on a sunny Sunday at Kew**

The London Walks Team: cardiacfriendswalks@outlook.com

Sunday- Monthly Coffee Mornings



The Sunday coffee mornings remain as popular as ever and wherever we choose to book amongst our venues, we always end up with around 30 people.

Weather seems to be irrelevant since we are all indoors anyway, and we practice the policy of moving the venue around to allow ease of travel for those who would find travelling a distance challenging.

One new addition to our list of venues was the café at the Shuttleworth Collection, Old Warden Airfield, which we arranged as a trial in August, and we were amazed at how many turned up - 45 in all! It is definitely one we will arrange again, although it needs careful planning to de-conflict with the flying displays which are held on the first Sunday of the month during the summer season.

If you do not take part in any of the other (more active) activities that Cardiac Friends offers, please give some serious consideration to coming to one of our coffee mornings. You will always be made most welcome and the only skill-set you need is the ability to talk - and listen. No brainer really! The next coffee morning is on Sunday 5th November at Cherry Lane, Langford Garden Centre. Finishing the year we are returning to 'Dimples' at the Letchworth Family Golf Centre. The date is Sunday 10th December.

As the London walks have ceased now until next April, we thought it might be an idea to arrange a few **extra** Coffee mornings - so watch out for further emails!

Barry Brown

Theatre Group / Places of Interest / Holiday

There is not much to report.

During the last 12 months three theatre trips have been organised. Due to very low interest shown by Members two of these had to be cancelled and although the 3rd trip went ahead it did make a financial loss.

However, the interest shown by Members for the 5 day/4 night holiday to Warner Thoresby Hall in April 2024 has exceeded all expectations. 48 members have now paid the £10 deposit and they have been sent details of the holiday. If there are any more members who are interested in joining us for this holiday, please let me know. Four Members that have paid the £10 deposit have had to cancel and as a result there are 2 double/twin rooms currently available.

Adam Kuzminski

Quiz Nights - Tuesdays (every 6 weeks)

Our next Cardiac Friends Quiz Night will take place on
Tuesday 7th November
starting at 7pm prompt
at
Churchill Retirement Living
Dovehouse Lodge
Wratten Road West
Hitchin
SG5 2EJ

Ian Sanders will be in the QM chair

Cardiac Friends Quiz Night
A questionable event

Ian Sanders

From the Editor

The London Walks photographs are courtesy of Ian Druce - Thank you Ian! They are from our first walk 'Battersea Power Station', fourth walk 'Palaces, Potter & Puddles (It's a great day in Greenwich)', where Kim told us about the history of this site, the 3rd one 'It's not all gardens (A South London Village)' Kew. Ian has taken plenty more photos and they are all on the website.

The Christmas Party is to be held on Saturday 2nd December, and this year we have booked entertainment in the person of Lucy Moyster - singer.



Heather Cotton has kindly offered to take the bookings and monies for the party once again.

As always, please feel free to send me any material which you think would be suitable for **YOUR** newsletter.

Ruth Brown



